

Vol. 12 No. 31

Merry Christmas from the Montana Aeronautics Division

December, 1979



The Aeronautics Division staff, left to right, Jerry Burrows, Jack Wilson, Pat Meyer, Paula Lindsey, Ruth Anderson, Vern Moody, Ted Mathis, Sam Griggs, Dave Kneedler and Mike Ferguson.

## Fly The Biggest Piece Back

The Mountain Press Publishing Company has announced the publication of Steve Smith's *Fly the Biggest Piece Back*, a lively biography of Missoula pilot Bob Johnson.

Bob Johnson was among the first mountain pilots, and his pioneering work established many techniques of mountain flying still in use today; smokejumping, freight transport to backcountry airstrips, search and

rescue, seeding and dusting, fire reconnaissance, and others. Johnson Flying Service grew from one single-engine biplane to a nationally recognized company with a fleet of planes, including the heavy prop-jets used in the 1970s. Steve Smith tells the story in a vivid and exciting way and includes vignettes of the other pilots and personalities involved in the company.

These books are available from local book stores or Mountain Press Publishing Company, P.O. Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806, (406) 728-1900 at a cost of \$14.95 each.

## FIRC

The Montana Aeronautics Division is again holding its annual Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 7, 8, and 9, 1980 in Helena. Please note that this is a date change from what had been previously listed on our calendar.

This is an FAA approved clinic conducted by GAITS Teaching Seminars with 24 hours of classroom instruction for renewal of all **current** flight instructor certificates and covers annual requirements for all chief flight instructors.

If your flight instructor certificate has expired a check ride will be necessary.

Scholarships are available to the first thirty applicants who are Montana registered flight instructors.

The Aeronautics Division will provide two aircraft and two Flight Instructor Designated Examiners who will be on hand Monday, March 10, in Helena for any flight instructor maneuvers that may need sharpening or flight instructor check rides for those with expired certificates.

For further information and applications check with your local FBO or contact the Montana Aeronautics Division, P.O. Box 5178, Helena, MT 59601, (406) 449-2506.

# Administrator's Column

It gave me a great deal of pleasure to be invited to officiate Gary Blain's successful attempt in breaking the world's solo record on his 16th birthday. Gary had to exceed 37 aircraft to break the old world record which he easily accomplished by soloing 53 airplanes and 5 helicopters, all different models. The documented record of aircraft flown by Gary was certified and sent to the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Gary has since passed his drivers test and is now legal on the ground too. I would like to again congratulate Gary on his success in achieving the world record. See pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter for photos and a more detailed description of this event.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Montana Coal Board turned down our request for a grant to conduct a study on the feasibility of a public airport at Colstrip. If the study had proved a public need for an airport then the necessary steps would have been taken to include Colstrip into the National Airport System Plan (NASP). If an airport was to be constructed at Colstrip sometime in the future it would then have been eligible to receive grant money from the FAA's aviation trust fund, more commonly known as the Airport Development Aid Program. Although there was considerable support of the proposal, the Rosebud County Commissioners voiced strong opposition fearing possible future financial involvement.

Needless to say the Aeronautics Board and the Aeronautics Division are disappointed in the actions taken, as we are reasonably confident that such a study would prove that Colstrip has a strong public need for access to the National Air Transportation System and can meet all of the criteria to be accepted into the NASP. It was our desire to pave the way for the town of Colstrip, in the event they become an incorporated city and should ever desire to pursue construction of a public airport.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Montana Aeronautics Board met on December 7 to hold their regular bi-monthly board meeting. They reviewed the hearing transcript and subsequently approved the resolution regarding the Big Sky Airlines Industrial Development Revenue Bond issue. The board further reviewed the memorandum of understanding which was submitted to Big Sky for their review and approval. This document details the reservation of certain board rights and contingencies.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

By the time you receive this newsletter the Civil Aeronautics Board should have made a determination on the level of essential air service for the highline and eastern route system which Frontier is currently flying. If the communities are not in agreement with the CAB's determination they have the right to appeal to a three-member staff panel. After an appeal is filed a hearing with the communities will be held. Anyone desiring may attend the hearing. This will give members of each affected community, not versed in the technicalities of administrative law, the opportunity to present their views directly to the decision-makers. We look forward to working with each community, the CAB and the airlines in an effort to receive the highest level of service for our state.

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On behalf of the entire Aeronautics staff I would like to thank all of you for your support and involvement in aeronautical matters during this past year and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Montana and the Sky  
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DEPARTMENT OF  
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Martin T. Mangan, Deputy Director

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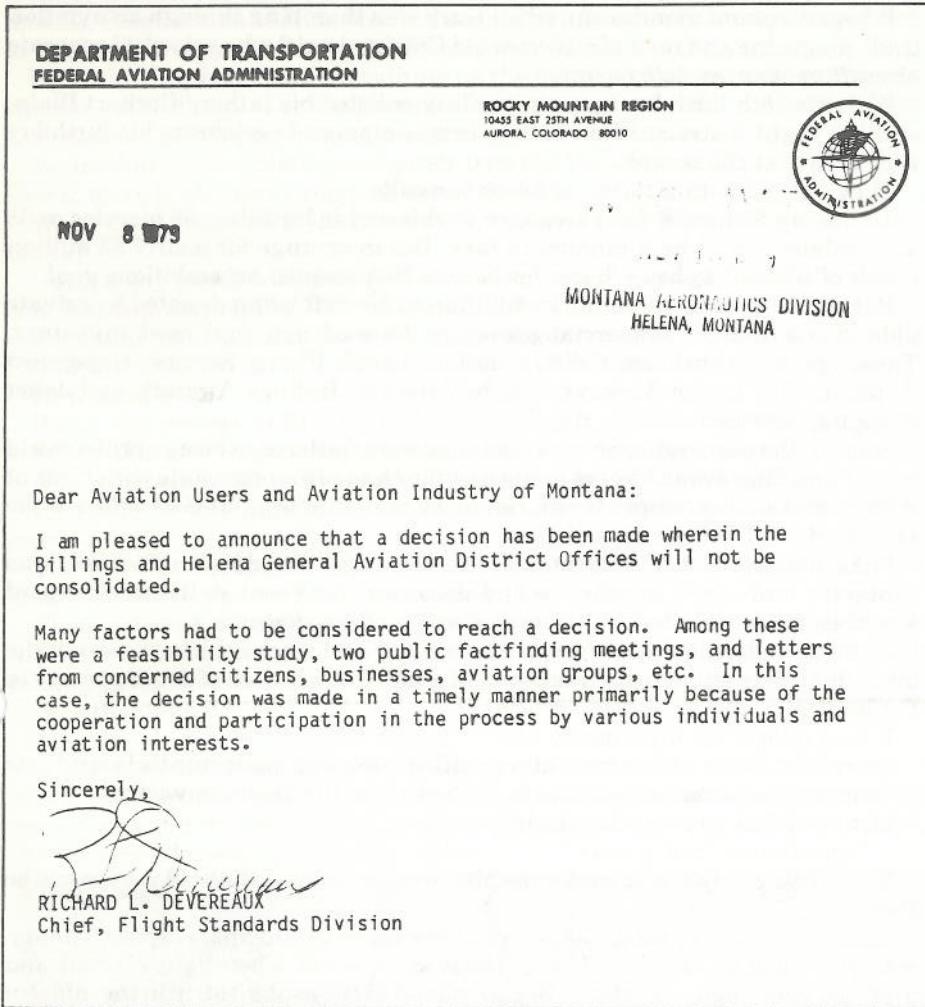
Edited by: Paula K. Lindsey



Creative Press

# GADO Consolidation

We were pleased to receive the following letter from the Chief of the Flight Standards Division, FAA in Denver. The joint effort on the part of many within (and without) the State of Montana succeeded in stopping this consolidation.



## Navigational Aids

By: Jerry Burrows  
Aviation Technician

The Sidney non-directional radio beacon (NDB) or H-Marker operating on 358 KHz with the identifier SDY has been completely refurbished this year.

With the capable help of electronics technician, Lloyd Scoles, who maintains the facility, the counter-poise or underground wiring portion of the system was reworked in July. This included replacing underground wires, ground rods and soldering all underground connections.

The overhead or flat-top portion of the system was completely replaced in mid-November. A new design for the down leads was designed and is now in use for the Sidney facility.

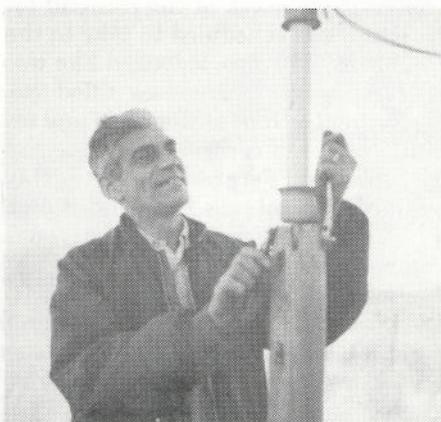
Technician Scoles has indicated during testing procedures that the 100 watt transmitter is now putting maximum power to the antenna with very little loss. If in fact this new antenna system does radiate further than those we have been using in the past, it will be attempted on some of our other older facilities.

We would appreciate receiving pilot reports on Sidney with information such as distance and altitude you received it. We are continually trying to improve our stations to get the maximum range and effectiveness for the type of equipment we have available. Your comments on these facilities is always appreciated. We would also appreciate a call if you discover any station off the air.

Libby is the only new station that we are working on at the present time. We hope to have the land leased and the necessary licensing paperwork accomplished so that the facility can be operational by next summer.



Gary congratulated by his mother, Aldona Blain.



Lloyd Scoles, Sidney NDB Technician, making final connection to the H-Marker.



Gary taking off in A.J. Patenaude's Call Air.



Keith Fitchett congratulated Gary after flying his Piper Navajo.



The finishing touch on Gary's birthday was a parachute jump. Left to right, Al Blain, Ron Litton, Gary, and Wally Blain.



Gary was congratulated by Milt Kramlick, Combs Airways, after flying their Aero Commander 500B.

# Blain Breaks Record

Gary Blain spent his 16th birthday earning a place in aviation's record books—flying 58 different aircraft, solo. Five of the 58 were helicopters.

It began several months ago when Gary was thumbing through an aviation trade magazine and read of a 16-year-old California girl who soloed 37 separate aircraft to set a world's record.

With his 16th birthday coming up, Gary enlisted his father, Gerhart Blain, and his flight instructor Ron Litton, in a campaign to celebrate his birthday with a shot at the record.

They opened with a flurry of telephone calls.

To line up 58 horses for a teenager to ride on his birthday, 58 bicycles or 58 automobiles would be a mammoth task. But to arrange for nearly \$3 million worth of aircraft to be on hand for Gary's 16th seemed an ambitious goal.

But the commitments came. In addition to aircraft being donated by private individuals, many commercial operators donated new and used inventory. These operators included Gillis Aviation, Lynch Flying Service, Upperwest Aviation, Red Lodge Airways, Combs Airways, Billings Aircraft, and Joliet Spraying Service.

Some of the pilots quizzed later said they were flattered to be a part of a world record breaking event. Others jumped at the chance to congregate with birds of a feather at an impromptu fly-in. But most said, in effect, "If Gerhart says the kid can do it, I believe he will do it."

Mike Ferguson, Administrator of the Montana Aeronautics Division was contacted and asked to officiate and document the event so the world record would be acceptable for the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

In the days leading up to October 13th, Gary and teacher Litton wore out the air in dual instruction so the youth would qualify to solo each of the 58 aircraft in the line-up.

It was a logistics nightmare.

One night, while Litton and Gary shuffled notes and made frantic last minute arrangements, someone remarked, "It looks like the D-Day invasion."

Litton looked up and remarked:

"Eisenhower had it easy."

Eisenhower only had to make one phone call to be sure all the planes would be there.

Saturday morning the show began at the Laurel Municipal Airport. The sun was still burning the fog off the Yellowstone River when light aircraft and \$100,000 twin-engine airplanes began to land at the asphalt strip in the midst of wheatfields north of the railroad town.

Gary was scheduled to take to the skies in a fresh plane every 10 minutes.

But by 7:20 a.m. it looked like the Battle of Britain over the Laurel strip.

Planes, like mosquitoes, filled the skies, waiting for a chance to land.

Father Gerhart skittered to and fro, like a hen with chicks, waving his arms in an attempt to control traffic.

Litton and Ferguson opted to delay Gary's early takeoffs until nearly 20 of the volunteer airplanes had landed and been parked.

Then, a one-man rodeo that would last until nearly 5 p.m. began as Gary stepped into a warmed-up plane and pointed it down the runway.

He opened with a Cessna 310C, landed and jogged to a waiting Piper PA 28-235. While he was still in the air, brother Al was warming up a Grumman AA1C and a Cessna 152II was being taxied into position.

He flew two twin engine Barons, a 40-year-old Piper Cub, and an open-cockpit homebuilt Evans Volksplane with a VW engine.

Soon he was putting a plane in the air, circling the countryside and landing at a clip of one craft every five minutes.

Litton, Ferguson and Gary's father were checking schedules, checking watches and ordering fresh airplanes to the line.

At times, the watch checker became a bit impatient when the 16-year-old would leave the field and linger a bit in the blue.

"Where is he?" Gerhart would fret.

"He's out there in an Aero Commander enjoying himself," brother Al would answer.

Since the record they were shooting for demanded that Gary solo 37 different models, Ferguson and Litton checked each aircraft before Gary crawled aboard to be sure it was not a duplicate of one flown earlier.

By 10:30 Gary had flown everything on the field and disappeared into the sky enroute to Billings Logan International Airport to add a Combs Aero Commander and a pair of single-engine planes to his tally.

Meanwhile, at the Blain home airstrip on the Yellowstone River west of Blue Creek, more birds were dropping out of the sky.

When Gary returned to his home field, Litton asked, "Do you want to take a break?"

Gary, a shy youth with a face of a choirboy and the gangly body of a spring colt, blushed and replied, "No, I think I'll fly another airplane."

Sometime near 2 p.m., Gary Blain, teenager, became Gary Blain, World's Champion Solo Artist, as he put his 38th craft into the air.

How good is he?

Pilots, the owners of \$15,000 to \$25,000 aircraft put into the trust of a youth scarcely this side of puberty, whistled as Gary landed their planes.

One whispered, "That kid lands my airplane better than I do."

He made 58 landings in 58 airplanes and helicopters, each as smooth as cream.

The sun was cutting its autumn course low across the horizon when Litton said, "That's it. You've flown everything there is to fly."

Then followed the chatter of camera lenses as Gary was photographed with his father, his instructor, the FAA and Aeronautics Division officials, his kissing grandmothers and a flock of helicopters.

And that was it.

Almost.

While his parents congratulated one another upon having lived through a hectic 16th birthday party, Gary, brother Al and instructor Litton strapped on parachutes and climbed into an airplane piloted by Gary's uncle. Minutes later, chutes were blossoming over the valley.



Rich McKamey congratulating Gary upon completion of a successful flight in his homebuilt Evans Volksplane.



Cessna Ag-Truck almost ready for take off.



A Cessna 310 was the first plane to be soloed by Gary, owned by his father and Jim Bennett.



Preparing for takeoff in a Cessna 185.



Gary getting into a 400 Commanche owned by Robert Downs of Hardin.



Gary after soloing three different models of the Bell Jet Ranger and one Bell 47G3B1.



Gary in the Pitts Special preparing for takeoff.



Upon return in Jim Steffeck's Bonanza M-35.



Ron Litton in keeping with tradition cut Gary's shirt tail after soloing a Piper PA-11, the last of the 58 aircraft.



Ralph Hoffman's Bonanza H-35 was also piloted by Gary. Instructor Ron Litton stands in foreground.



Gary flanked by "Mac" McDonald, FAA, GADO inspector (left) and Mike Ferguson, Administrator of the Aeronautics Division.



Lynch Flying Service donated the use of this new Cessna 182RG.



Gary was congratulated by Ralph Nelles after successfully soloing Ralph's D-55 Baron.



After just returning from one of the 58 aircraft in a twin Comanche owned by Schaak Brothers.

## AMRS

The Montana Aeronautics Division will again host the Montana Mechanics Refresher Seminar on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, February 5, 6, and 7, 1980, in Helena.

This year we will have several new additions to our speakers, new topics, and a new time frame.

We will have presentations by Cessna, Piper, Continental and Lycoming. Presentation on the Bendix fuel injection, aero propellers, Bell helicopters and turbine engines by Pratt & Whitney and Garrett will also be made.

The one and only Arnold Nickson will also be on hand, who should need no introduction.

Chrome Plate will be there with another excellent presentation.

Thursday afternoon the Billings and Helena GADOs will present a joint program on IA renewals and other topics. Both GADOs have agreed to accept attendance at this seminar for IA renewal in lieu of IA meetings in each district.

For further details and an application see your nearest FBO or contact the Aeronautics Division, P.O. Box 5178, Helena, MT 59601, (406) 449-2506.

## Calendar

**February 5-7** — Aviation Mechanics Refresher Seminar - see above article.

**February 14-16** — Montana Aviation Trades Association Convention, Colonial Inn, Helena. Contact Karen Lathrop at 453-4021 (Great Falls) for details.

**March 7-9** — Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic - see article.

**March 11-13** — 6th Annual Aviation Maintenance Seminar, North Dakota. Contact David Carlson, Williston (701) 572-3773.

**June 13 & 14** — Montana Pilots Convention, Billings.

**June 29** — Flying Farmers Queen Joan Wilson Fly-In, Moore, MT.

**July 19 & 20** — Beacon Star Antique Airfield Fly-In.

**October 3-5** — Montana Flying Farmers Convention, Helena.

**October 4** — Helloween Air Race.

# CONGRATULATIONS!

## FAA Certificates Issued Recently to Pilots

### PRIVATE

Dennis M. Davis, Miles City  
 Roger D. Wright, Laurel  
 Alfred J. Daigneau, Billings  
 Charles D. Baarsch, Billings  
 Nancy Jo Stockton, Billings  
 Robert W. Grimes, II, Billings  
 Ronald W. Armstrong, Billings  
 David W. Dewald, Billings  
 Judy Van Voast  
 Alan J. Lerner, Billings  
 Gary R. Meyer, Billings  
 Frank C. Richter, Billings  
 Walter L. Ware, Scobey  
 Sharon M. Nelson, Sidney  
 Kenneth A. Samuelson, Lewistown  
 Robert B. Jam, Jr., Billings  
 Arvid B. Wedul, Billings  
 Glen A. Larson, Billings  
 Sylvester L. Lahren, Billings  
 Joesph E. Mudd, Bridger  
 Marydean Dickey, Billings  
 Cheryl M. Crandall, Billings  
 Gerald L. Dubois, Billings  
 Dennis W. Johnson, Billings  
 Jeffrey G. Bost, Billings  
 Greg J. Hatch, Billings  
 Ronnie L. Moross, Pray  
 Barry L. Chubb, Livingston  
 Gerald H. Ellis, Broadus  
 Kirk K. Lund, Billings  
 Brian J. Schwend, Rosebud  
 Jose L. Johnson, Terry  
 Joseph D. Stevenson, Miles City  
 Jerry C. Kimball, Miles City  
 Glen L. Arnold, Glasgow  
 Rolland W. Arnold, Billings  
 Joseph E. Brand, Great Falls  
 Bradley C. Fay, Billings  
 Ted F. Moseman, Fort Peck  
 Steven F. Curtis, Billings  
 Richard L. Dyck, Wolf Point  
 Phil R. Morrow, Billings  
 Michael C. Kaiser, Glasgow  
 Joseph E. Philippi, Nashua  
 Nancy Etchart, Glasgow  
 Edwin W. Watson, Glasgow  
 Dave C. Farley, Billings  
 Raymond F. Utzman, Jr., Billings  
 Randall P. Crellin, Billings  
 Ronald A. Shaide, Fairview  
 Daniel R. Enebo, Glasgow  
 Michael D. Pattillo, Sidney  
 John H. Schnitzmeier, Chester  
 Gerald R. Williams, Lewistown  
 Larry R. Schmitt, Stanford  
 Wayne D. Chapman, Lewistown  
 Leo F. Jackson, Billings

Kay M. Roam, Billings  
 Michael P. Visser, Rapelje  
 Robert E. Rowe, Billings  
 Rex B. Humphrey, Billings  
 Taun U. Deverill, Billings  
 Thomas J. Lynch, Billings  
 James L. Pearson, Billings  
 Daniel J. Shaules, Billings  
 William L. Robeson, Billings  
 Craig L. Wiggs, Reedpoint  
 Rich C. Sanford, Bridger  
 Craig W. Feldman, Billings  
 Larry A. Mayer, Billings  
 Leslie A. Cox, Billings  
 Richard D. Fisher, Billings  
 Kenneth D. Peterson, Billings  
 Carl B. Hope, Big Horn  
 Kenneth C. Richardson, Billings  
 Todd M. Woltermann, Columbus  
 Kenneth E. Cysewski, Billings  
 Thomas E. Elliot, Billings  
 Les N. Hudson, Livingston  
 Curtis E. Clark, Billings  
 William J. Starr, Laurel  
 Thomas M. Foess, Livingston  
 Michael W. Beale, Great Falls  
 Terry R. Westphal, Whitefish  
 Steven D. Thompkins, Big Fork  
 James M. McNinch, Stevensville  
 Bradley J. Anderson, Dillon  
 James F. Ellis, Great Falls  
 Arthur L. Tuell, Thompson Falls  
 Mark S. St. Sauver, Bigfork  
 Albert A. DeVore, Missoula  
 Cole T. Chandler, Havre  
 Larry T. Lofthouse, Great Falls  
 Darrell J. Monson, Great Falls  
 Ted J. Farrow, Butte  
 Michael P. Scharf, Deer Lodge  
 Theodore T. Ralls, Darby  
 Tammi M. Morton, Kalispell  
 Clifford M. James, Jr., Kalispell  
 Kimberly A. Ord, Conrad  
 Curt R. Oedewaldt, Shelby

### ATP

Wilbur Van Sant Martin, Missoula  
 (MEL)  
 Gary L. Smestad, Great Falls  
 Walter E. Malone, Miles City  
 Michael E. Walsh, Billings  
 Steven C. Baer, Billings  
 Richy A. Bjelkevig, Billings  
 Norman B. McLane, Laurel  
 Richard D. Hoffman, Bozeman

### INSTRUCTOR

Charles O. Moore, Roundup  
 Donald C. Paul, Clancy (Renewal)  
 William C. Paullin, Kalispell  
 (PASEL)  
 Larry E. Steck, Helena (CFI ASEL)  
 Deanna R. Strand-Foss, Kalispell  
 (CASEL)  
 Betty A. Sweeting, Glasgow  
 James H. Rothrock, Billings  
 Marla K. Patterson, Billings

Thomas C. Lampee II, Wolf Point  
 John R. Stene, Malta  
 Alfred E. Hardy, Circle (Reinstated)  
 Harold M. Johnstone, Angela  
 Sage H. Olson, Billings  
 Raymond D. Van Cleave, Billings  
 Ruben G. Weibert, Hardin (Renewed)  
 Gary A. Roam, Billings  
 Henry L. Esp, Hardin (Renewed)  
 Allen J. Coomber, Billings (Private)  
 Richard C. Thomas, Billings  
 John S. Poling, Billings (Renewed)  
 Steven K. Holding, Billings  
 Roger D. Meggars, Baker (Renewed)  
 Victor G. Wokal, Glasgow (Renewed)  
 James A. Murray, Savage (Renewed)  
 Keith W. Fitchett, Laurel (Reinstated)  
 Walter E. Malone, Miles City  
 Roger L. Maki, Missoula (Renewed)  
 Stanley G. Colton, Lewistown  
 Donald H. Newton, Lewistown  
 John B. Bethel, Baker (Renewed)  
 Edgar Justesen, Glendive (Renewed)  
 Irving W. Muir, Billings (Renewed)  
 John D. Stanek, Billings  
 Roger D. Schmierer, Sidney

### INSTRUMENT

Kenneth C. Conrad, Billings (CFI)  
 Charles R. Peavy, Billings (PA)  
 Howard A. Carlson, Seeley Lake (PA)  
 Jeffery S. Mattheis, Billings (CFI)  
 Gary A. Roam, Billings (PA)  
 Rae F. Young, Red Lodge (PA)

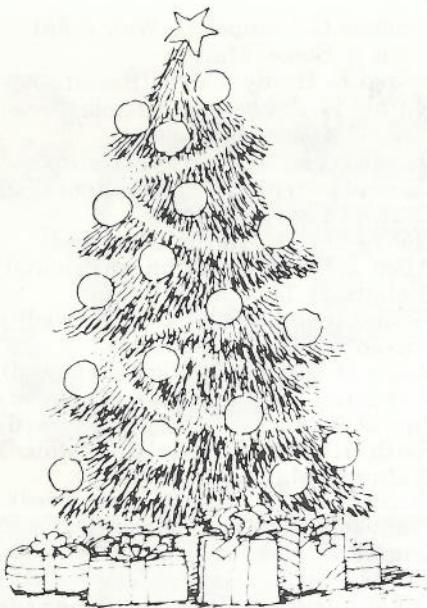
### MULTI-ENGINE

John R. Stene, Malta (CA)  
 Ronald D. Bradshaw, Billings (CFI)  
 James A. Murray, Savage (CA)  
 Bill A. Brosz, Great Falls (CA)  
 Glen F. Munro, Butte (CA)  
 Milton V. Kramlick, Billings (PA)  
 Kenneth C. Conrad, Billings (CA)  
 John M. Sindelar, Billings (PA)  
 Mathew W. Caudill, Billings (CA)  
 Laurence R. Hoem, Grey Cliff (CA)  
 William F. Helsper, Missoula  
 (CFI ASEL)

Bruce E. Depew, Missoula  
 (CASEL & INSTR)  
 Gregory B. Mecklenburg, Bozeman  
 (CFI ASEL & INSTR)  
 Merton P. Myhre, Helena  
 (CASEL, INSTR)  
 Michael S. Pemper, Somers  
 (CASEL & INSTR)

### COMMERCIAL

Richard A. Danylieko, Billings  
 Marvin L. Lange, Billings  
 John E. Stanek, Billings  
 Gary A. Roam, Billings  
 David J. Wang, Billings  
 Duane W. Scanland, Corvallis  
 Richard E. Geiger, Jr., Helena  
 Deanna R. Strand-Foss, Kalispell



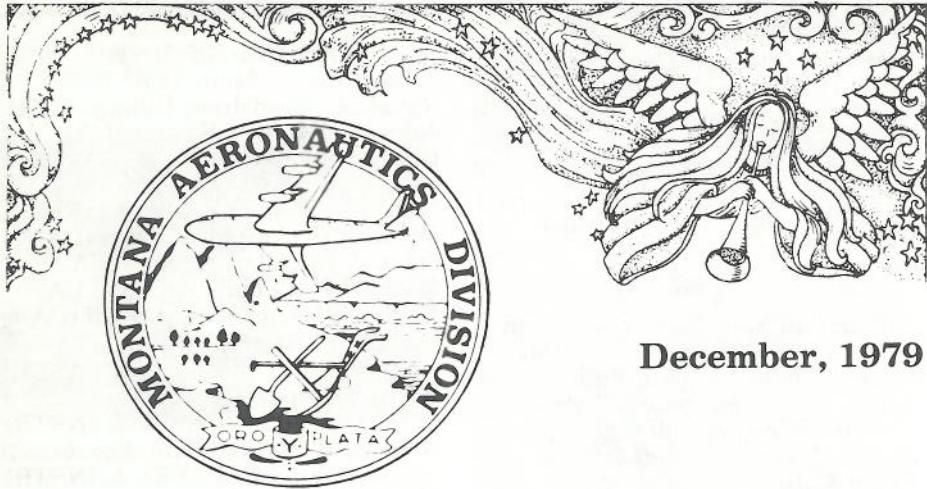
## New Tenant

Helena's old air terminal isn't sitting idle. Morrison Flying Service has remodeled the old Helena terminal building which now has a lounge for visitors and customers, office spaces, a pilots' lounge, a flight planning area and a coffee shop that will open the first of the new year. Morrison is the oldest aviation service in Montana and has been in service since 1931. Services offered are chartered flights, contract flying, flight instruction, aircraft rental and sales of aircraft and fuel. The service is open seven days a week from 7:30 a.m. to dark (winter hours) and is also available on call.



MEMBER  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AVIATION OFFICIALS

PURPOSE—“To foster aviation, as an industry, as a mode of transportation for persons and property and as an arm of the national defense; to join with the Federal Government and other groups in research, development, and advancement of aviation; to develop uniform laws and regulations; and to otherwise encourage cooperation and mutual aid among the several states.”



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